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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BO](#) [FR](#) [KV](#) [NO](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: NEW COE SECGEN: I WILL HELP ON GITMO RESETTLEMENT

CLASSIFIED BY: Vincent Carver, CG, Strasbourg, State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)
SUMMARY

1. (C) New Council of Europe (COE) Secretary General Thorbjorn Jagland agreed November 9 to raise the resettlement of detainees from Guantanamo with officials from all 47 COE member-states, including his native Norway. Jagland stressed that the COE needs to reach out to positive forces in Russia, said Belarus would not have automatic COE membership if it announced a death penalty moratorium, and observed that a membership application from Kosovo would cause controversy within the COE. End summary.

HELPING ON GITMO

2. (C) During a November 9 courtesy call, we asked new COE SecGen Thorbjorn Jagland to lobby officials from member-states that have not already accepted Guantanamo detainees for resettlement to do so. In light of the President's visit to Oslo next month, we added, it might be helpful if he raised this issue early with his Norwegian colleagues. Jagland replied immediately that he would do so, noting that all European governments that had criticized Guantanamo should help the U.S. close it.

RUSSIA: COE MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS

3. (C) Jagland turned to Russia, noting that the COE has an enormous and critical job in helping those inside Russia who seek to improve the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights. He said President Medvedev and those surrounding him appear committed to modernize Russia. We observed that Moscow should be judged by its words but rather by its actions. In this regard, the continued murders of human rights activists and journalists are troubling. We also noted that some would argue that Prime Minister Putin, rather than President Medvedev, is directing Russian policy. Jagland replied that regardless of which leader has the ultimate word, the Council of Europe has a key role in Russia - that of monitoring the human rights situation - something no other international or regional institution is doing.

BELARUS: WILL HAVE TO DO MUCH MORE FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

4. (C) We asked what the COE will do if Minsk announces a moratorium on the death penalty. Jagland acknowledged that the COE would revive Belarus' associate membership. That said, he stressed that Belarus must take systematic measures to improve its domestic record on human rights and democracy if it ever wants full membership.

KOSOVO MEMBERSHIP: RUSSIA AND SERBIA

¶5. (C) We concluded that we would like to see a membership application from Pristina earlier, rather than later, in Jagland's five-year mandate. Jagland commented that both Russia and Serbia would be problematic on this.

¶6. (U) Jagland was accompanied by his Private Office Director, Bjorn Berge.

CARVER